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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/830,514	04/27/2001	Jurgen Rabenhorst	M0-6305/HR-1	8206
157	7590	06/30/2004		EXAMINER
			RAMIREZ, DELIA M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
		1652		

DATE MAILED: 06/30/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/830,514	RABENHORST ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Delia M. Ramirez	1652

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 17-31 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) ____ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) 17-31 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Status of the Application

Claims 17-31 are pending.

Applicant's submission of a preliminary amendment on 4/27/2003 canceling claims 1-16 and adding new claims 17-31 is acknowledged.

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 17-23, 29-31, drawn to (a) an organism comprising enzymes of eugenol and/or ferulic acid metabolism which are inactivated such that the intermediates coniferyl alcohol, coniferyl aldehyde, ferulic acid, vanillin and/or vanillic acid accumulate, (b) a method of use of the organism of (a) in the preparation of alcohols, aldehydes, and organic acids, and (c) a method of making the organism of (a).

Groups II-XIX, claim(s) 17, 24-28, drawn in part to nucleic acids comprising SEQ ID NO: 1-18, respectively (i.e. Group II is drawn to a nucleic acid comprising SEQ ID NO: 1, Group III is drawn to a nucleic acid comprising SEQ ID NO: 2...and Group XIX is drawn to a nucleic acid comprising SEQ ID NO: 18).

2. The inventions listed as Groups I-XIX do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons:

3. According to PCT Rule 13.2, unity of invention exists only when the shared same or corresponding technical feature is a contribution over the prior art. The inventions listed as Groups I-IX do not relate to a single general inventive concept because they lack the same or corresponding special

technical feature. The special technical feature of Group I is being an organism comprising enzymes of eugenol and/or ferulic acid metabolism which are inactivated such that the intermediates coniferyl alcohol, coniferyl aldehyde, ferulic acid, vanillin and/or vanillic acid accumulate. This feature is shown by Priefert et al. (J. Bacteriol 179(8):2595-2607, April 1997) to lack novelty or inventive step since the reference teaches mutants of *Pseudomonas* sp. HR 199 which are unable to grow on vanillin but can grow on protocatechuate due to inactivation of the vanillin dehydrogenase gene (vdh) which catalyzes the conversion of vanillin to vanillic acid (page 2596, right column, Results). Furthermore, this feature is also shown by Gasson et al. (J. Biol. Chem. 273:4163-4170, 1998; cited in the IDS) to lack novelty or inventive step since the reference teaches mutants of *Pseudomonas fluorescens* which cannot catalyze the conversion of ferulic acid to vanillin (page 4165, left column, Isolation of Mutants in Ferulate Utilization). Thus, the technical feature of Group I is not a contribution over the prior art.

4. According to PCT Rule 13.2 and to the guidelines in Section (f)(i)(B)(1) of Annex B of the PCT Administrative Instructions, all alternatives of a Markush Group must have a common property or activity. Although the nucleic acids of Groups II-XIX share a common property in that they are nucleic acids, the compounds are not regarded as being of similar nature because all the alternatives do not share a common structure or function.

5. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement can be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

6. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a petition under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

7. Certain papers related to this application may be submitted to Art Unit 1652 by facsimile transmission. The FAX number is (703) 872-9306. The faxing of such papers must conform with the notices published in the Official Gazette, 1156 OG 61 (November 16, 1993) and 1157 OG 94 (December 28, 1993) (see 37 CFR 1.6(d)). NOTE: If Applicant submits a paper by FAX, the original copy should be retained by Applicant or Applicant's representative. NO DUPLICATE COPIES SHOULD BE SUBMITTED, so as to avoid the processing of duplicate papers in the Office.

8. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PMR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Delia M. Ramirez whose telephone number is (571) 272-0938. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dr. Ponnathapura Achutamurthy can be reached on (571) 272-0928. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1234.

Delia M. Ramirez, Ph.D.
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 1652

DR
June 23, 2004



PONNATHAPURA ACHUTAMURTHY
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1600